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May 16 1872



## ART. IV.—REV. THOMAS BACON—1745–1768,

INCUMBENT OF ST. PETER'S, TALBOT CO., AND ALL SAINTS, FREDERICK CO., MARYLAND.

MR. BACON was a man, who, in his day, occupied a very promising position in the public eye, and has left memorials of himself, which will secure his name from being forgotten, for generations yet to come. But these memorials are becoming, as years pass on, less and less known, even to the lovers of the past. It is due therefore to his memory, standing so high and so fair as he did, both in the Church and in the civil community, that he should be more widely and permanently known, especially in the State of his adoption, whose history must be forever indebted to him, beyond that of any other one who has ever lived within its borders.

Mr. Bacon was a native of the Isle of Man, an island in the Irish Sea, about equi-distant from England, Scotland and Ireland, which forms part of the Diocese of the Bishop of Sodor and Man. He must have been born not far from the year 1700, and was of good lineal descent, being the brother of Sir Anthony Bacon. Of his early education, we have learned nothing. But so early as 1737, he had published a volume, by order of the chief Commissioners and Governors of the revenue of the Kingdom. This is said to have been a laborious and judicious work, entitled a "Complete System of Revenue in England." This fact may show us that, up to this period, he had been engaged in civil pursuits, that he had become favorably known to the public, and that he had attained some years in life's manhood. He at this time appears to have resided in the City of Dublin.

Having at length passed through various scenes in life, experienced various turns of fortune, travelled through many countries, and laden with the knowledge of books and men, [see *Med. Gaz.* Sept. 1768,] he came, ripe in age, to the decision of giving himself to his Master's cause in a Missionary life,

in some one of England's Foreign Colonies. He then became the pupil of the pious and celebrated Bishop Wilson, of the Diocese just mentioned. Having completed his studies, he was admitted to Holy Orders by him, (as is shown in the London and Oxford edition, 1853, of his *Sacra Privata*,) being ordained by him Deacon, Sept. 23, 1744, at Kirk Michael, by permission of the Lord Bishop of London, for a Missionary and Priest, March 10, 1745, in order to go to the Plantations.

Soon after this, he received the appointment of Chaplain to Lord Baltimore, whose ancestors and himself, for forty years past, had been Protestants, and then sailed for Maryland. Early in the October following, he had reached Oxford, in Talbot County, on the Eastern Shore, having with him his wife and son. Mr. Henry Callister, a merchant, was then residing there, who was also from the Isle of Man, and Mr. Bacon brought him letters from his friends of that Island, which secured for him a most welcome reception.

From Mr. Callister's letter-book, now in the writer's possession, we have copies of letters, in which Mr. Bacon is often mentioned. In one to Mr. William Tear, of Douglass, a small sea-port in the Isle of Man, dated Nov. 5, 1745, he writes thus :—

“I should have passed for a tip-top musician, if the Rev. Mr. Bacon had not come in, and handed me your letter, and some others from Douglass. Immediately, on Landing, he found the way to our house, and staid with me about half a day. He has been to see us several times since. And at our parish Church, [St. Peters, the old Church at Whitemarsh,] he has given us several Sermons. \* \* \* He is a very agreeable companion, and a sober and learned man. His performance on the violin and violincello, has afforded us much delight, and his conversation as much. I have a pretty set of music, and he has a better. We have a brute of a parson here, in our parish, and the Vestry and people would gladly turn him out, to make room for Mr. Bacon, but the latter will not be concerned, as he compassionates the other's misfortunes. We shall however prevail on him, at last, to accept a good salary. The ordinary salary would not be much, but the extraordinary subscriptions which he would get, if he would stay with us, would be worth his while. He has, in a very little time, got the esteem of our best people. He is still a neighbor, but I am afraid he will leave us, as soon as a vacancy in some other part of the province offers for him.”

Of the sainted Herbert, who died only ten years previous to

this, it is said, his chiefest recreation was music, in which heavenly art he was a most excellent master, and did himself compose many hymns and anthems, which he set and sung to his lute or viol. He would often say, religion does not banish mirth, but only moderates and sets rules to it. In this respect, Bacon was like Herbert. And though some, now-a-days, look upon the use of the viol with no little horror, yet his love of music will not be set down as a fault, or as necessarily detracting from the most earnest piety and devotion.

The "brute of a Parson," mentioned by Mr. Callister, soon after this left the Parish. He was not, however, the incumbent, or Rector of it, but the Rector's Curate, employed to relieve him, under the infirmities of his old age. On leaving here, this Curate was appointed the incumbent of St. Margaret's, Westminster parish, in Ann Arundel County; the parish between Baltimore and Annapolis. Here he continued some five years, and then was presented to Coventry parish, Somerset County. His character has come down to us, as that of an unblushing drunkard and gambler, whose end is said to have been according to his work,—he died in jail! being there for debt, and none were found to help him. Happily for the Church of Maryland, before the Revolution, the like were rare; while the Hendersons, the Cradocks, the Brogdens, and others like them, formed the great majority, and stood up manfully for Gospel truth and holiness. But most unhappy was it for the Church, that Maryland should have had a Governor—a Protestant—who twice, by virtue of his office, placed such a man as was this curate, in the charge of souls. No wonder that Pope should have held him up to scorn and ridicule as he did.

Just one week after Mr. Callister wrote as above, he wrote to his brother in Douglass, in which he says:—

"I received with pleasure yours of the 18th of June, which was handed me by the Rev. Mr. Thomas Bacon, whom I am in great hopes we shall retain among us. He is very much esteemed by the best of our people, and almost universally, he is esteemed a clever fellow, and I believe a good man; we have had several concerts together. \* \* \* He is received as curate of this parish, and is allowed by the Parson, who is now an invalid, 20,000 lbs. of tobacco per annum, with per-



quisites, which may amount to 5, or 6,000 more, which is a very good living, [being near \$600.] And when the old parson dies, which he will, in a very little time, I hope he will get the berth. It is about 50,000 lbs. of Tobacco per annum, which is worth in this country, one year with another, 500*l.* paper money, or £250 sterling; [\$1,080.] And as parsons are allowed to trade with their tobacco, if he will ship it to England, it may produce as much more per annum."

Mr. Bacon had now thus become the Curate of the parish; was esteemed by those whose esteem was worth having, and held to be a sober, learned, and good man, and very agreeable. So speaks Mr. Callister. The parson of the parish mentioned was the Rev. Daniel Maynadin. He had been the incumbent of the parish for more than thirty-two years. He was by birth a French Protestant, but had taken Orders in the Church of England. Late in this very year he died, leaving sons and daughters, whose descendants still remain and occupy a high social condition. As Mr. Callister had hoped, Mr. Bacon succeeded to the incumbency of the parish, and his ministry proved most acceptable. The congregation, during this his first year, so increased, that the vestry found it necessary to enlarge the Church, by an addition of nearly one half. On the 21st of Aug., 1746, Mr. C., in writing to Mr. William Henderson, the King's officer at Ramsay, another town in the Isle of Man, says to him:—

"I presume you have been acquainted, in the Island, with Mr. Thomas Bacon. He is now our parson, and I think him the worthiest clergyman I ever knew, not excepting the Bishop [Wilson]."

To his brother, at the same date, he writes:—

"Mr. Bacon has, since my last, been inducted into the parish, and gives entire satisfaction to all his parishioners."

One month after this, he writes to the same,—“Mr. and Mrs. Bacon desire their compliments to you. Mr. Bacon lives now in Town, [Oxford,] next door but one to our house.” The parish had indeed a large glebe near by the Church, at which the former incumbent resided. But it is not unlikely that, from its isolated condition, and Mr. B.’s social turn, he found Oxford more to his liking, though six miles distant.

On the 20th of Nov., writing again to Mr. Tear,—“I showed Mr. Bacon your letter,” he says. “He expressed much satis-

faction in being so honorably mentioned. I cannot at this time promise to send you any of Mr. Bacon's music, [for he was a composer as well as a performer,] but I shall, I expect, send you some by the next opportunity."

Previous to Aug. 1747, Mr. Callister had removed from Oxford to the head of the Wye, some twenty-four miles distant, quite in the northern part of the county, and Mr. Bacon had removed to a place called Dover, twelve miles or more distant. On the 23d, Mr. C. writes to his brother,—“Mr. Bacon and his family are well, and in great esteem. Since I removed up here, they are removed from Oxford about twelve miles nearer me. I had the pleasure to entertain them, on the first of March last, at Oxford, when Mr. B. toasted you; and Mrs. B. expressed, with tears of gratitude, some little obligations they owed you.” She had left the loved home of her youth, braved the dangers of the ocean, and was now dwelling in a far distant and comparatively wilderness land, where, in places not far off, was still the lingering haunt of savages. O, it is no wonder, when her thoughts were borne homeward, as they now were, that tears should come thus, at the recollection of kindnesses bestowed by those she loved there in days past. It was not the overflowing of any sickly sensibility.

Here Mr. Callister's letter-book, kindly furnished me by the Goldsboroughs of Myrtle Grove, fails us; but among his papers yet remaining, are found a number of short notes, on business matters, addressed him by Mr. Bacon in his own hand writing. One among them is this:—

“Dear Harry, I was not at home when your messenger came or returned,—else should have performed your commands. This is to summon you and Mrs. Callister to attend, according to promise, at my house-warming. Should be glad if Mr. and Mrs. Emerson would bear you company.

Yours,

T. BACON.

22d Jan. 1748.

His Excellency, of Oxford, will be here, with the facetious and merry magistrate Captain. Fail not to obey this summons, as you will answer the contrary at your peril.”

At this time, he had become settled at his new home, Dover, and thus called his friends around him to celebrate the event. It shows his buoyancy of spirits then, but we may well sup-

pose, from his known character, that the house-warming spoken of did not mean the frolic so usual on such occasions.

But we come now more directly to his work in preaching to his people. In the preface to a small volume of Sermons, published two years after this, he thus addresses his parishioners :—

“Upon being appointed your minister, I began seriously and carefully to examine into the state of religion in the parish, and I found a great many poor negro slaves, belonging to Christian masters and mistresses, yet living in as profound ignorance of what Christianity really is, as if they had remained in the midst of those barbarous, heathen countries, from whence they or their parents were first imported. Being moved therefore with compassion, at seeing such numbers of poor souls wandering in the mazes of sin and error, as sheep having no shepherd, no kind, tender-hearted Christian to set them right, and considering them as a part of the flock which Almighty God had placed under my care, I began seriously to consider in what manner I could best discharge my duty towards them, and deliver my own soul from the guilt of their blood, lest they should perish through my negligence.

My first attempts towards it consisted in occasional conversation and advice, as often as I happened to meet with any of them at my own house, or at a neighbor's, or upon the road, etc., and, in short, familiar exhortations, as opportunity brought a number of them together, at any quarter where I visited their sick, or at their funerals or marriages. I then determined to preach to them on particular Sundays or holy days.”

In carrying out this determination, he preached, this year, two Sermons to “a congregation of black slaves,” and published them, just as they were heard. They were printed in London. They were intended, simply, as a draught, or foundation of his future discourses to them, which would be only larger explanation of the practical duties which he had here but little more than hinted at. And one reason given for their publication, as he states, was, that possibly “it might raise a spirit of emulation among his brethren, to attempt something in their respective parishes towards the bringing home so great a number of wandering souls to Christ. In setting this scheme, for the better instruction of the negroes, on foot in my parish, I consulted nothing but conscience, and had no other view than the discharge of that duty I so solemnly took upon me, at my being admitted into holy Orders.” To bring souls home

to Christ thus,—this was his object, and such was the spirit and the manner in which he began and prosecuted the work.

Of these two Sermons, the text is, Eph. vi : 8. And he considers, first, why they ought to serve God ; secondly, what service or good things, God expects from them ; and then, what kind of reward they may expect to receive from Him. And it is certainly not too much to say, that each point is set forth plainly, faithfully, and earnestly, and exhibits an admirable example of coming down to the capacities of those whom he was addressing, without vulgarity, and of reaching the conscience with sound gospel truth.

In a note to Mr. Callister, of May 3, 1748, from Dover, he mentions not only his wife and son, but also the Chapel. This is the first mention of the old Chapel which we meet with, which had just then been erected, in the North East part of the parish, called Chapel Hundred. Its erection shows us that the attendance on his public services had so increased, at this time, as to require this additional provision. The remains of this Chapel still exist. But where is the spirit of its founder fled, that nothing but those remains exist ? Are there no souls to be brought to Christ in that neighborhood, and provided for in this late day, by the Church in that parish ?

But Mr. Bacon did not stop in his work in behalf of the slaves, with what he had thus far done. During the year 1749, he preached four Sermons to Masters and Mistresses, which were published in London the next Summer. In 1817, they were republished here, in a *cheap* form, by the late Bishop of Virginia, then the Rev. Dr. Meade, leaving out, however, the title page, the very valuable preface, and some other portions ; in one place to the amount of six pages ; and this, too, without a single hint of any such omissions. Why this was done, of course we do not know ; but that it was just to the author, no one can hesitate to deny. The Volume, as at first published, was a small 12mo., with this title page :—

“ Four Sermons, upon the great and indispensable duty of all Christian Masters and Mistresses, to bring up their negro slaves in the knowledge and fear of God, preached at the parish Church of St. Peter's, Talbot County, in the Province of Maryland, by the Rev. Thomas Bacon, Rector of said Parish,” &c.

Having mentioned, in his preface, what he had felt it to be his own duty to do, in this work, and spoken of its greatness and of its difficulties, he tells us that he found he must have help ; and this, he adds,—

“Put me upon considering where laborers might be had. And finding, upon the strictest and most impartial inquiry, that it is the indispensable duty of all masters and mistresses, to bring up their slaves in the knowledge and fear of God, I was determined to call in assistance from where it was due. I therefore, as steward, and in the name of the Lord of the harvest, do press and invite you to work in His Vineyard, and do promise, on His part, that whatsoever is right, whatsoever is just and equal, that shall ye receive.”

After meeting some objections, learnedly and successfully, he says, “that negroes, being of the human species, have souls as well as we, and are equally capable of salvation. Christian duty, therefore, would require of us to endeavor their conversion, and labor for the good of their souls, though they did not belong to us. Much more, then, are we bound to this duty, as they are part of our families and substance, and absolutely under our power and direction.”

And he takes occasion to say, in this connection, that,—

“The bringing of children to Baptism is, in the office [therefor], called a charitable work, because the putting of souls in the way of salvation is the highest act of Christian charity. This charitable work is, plainly, a branch of the duty of all owners of slaves, who ought either to appear for them in person at the font, or provide sufficient god-fathers and god-mothers for them in Baptism. These are called sureties, because they give security, in the presence of God and the congregation, that the member brought by them to be received into Christ’s Church, shall be taught all things which a Christian ought to know, and believe, to his soul’s health, and shall be virtuously brought up, to lead a godly and a Christian life. Every member thus received, becomes a debtor to that Covenant, to the belief and practice of God’s laws. And the god-fathers and god-mothers are in the nature of bond-men to the Church, for the due performance of them. And if it be your duty to bring your slaves into covenant with God, as it was formerly the duty of Jewish masters to bring theirs into covenant with Him, by circumcision, which surely cannot admit of any dispute, you ought, at least, to provide sufficient sureties for them at the font, if you care not to appear for them in person. And you must, in your hearts and consciences, acquit me from any ill-natured charge of stiffness or preciseness, if, in pursuance of my duty to God, and the Church, whose minister I am, I shall always in-

sist on properer securities for these poor slaves, than such as commonly offer among themselves."

We cannot but ask here, why all this, and much more, in the six pages before alluded to, on this point, was left out in the edition of 1817?

The text which forms the ground-work of these four Sermons, is Col. iv : 1.—"Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven." After an exceedingly appropriate introduction, in which is considered the great principle of the text, Mr. Bacon lays down the particular obligation drawn from it, announced in the title page, and then goes on to consider, first, the nature of this obligation; secondly, the advantages attending a due compliance therewith; thirdly, the common excuses and objections which are made concerning it; and lastly, in what manner this duty may best be performed, to the discharging of our consciences, and with the greatest probability of success.

The consideration of these four points, occupies his four Sermons. To say that his language, in discussing them, is classical, yet plain; his thoughts fresh, yet clear; his positions sustained ably and conclusively, and sometimes eloquently; and that the Gospel is distinctly and faithfully presented; and all with the most intrepid, yet affectionate and Christian spirit,—is saying only what is true, simply true.

"O great and glorious Lord, pour forth thy Holy Spirit into our hearts, that our affections, being fixed on the performance of that which Thou commandest, and our endeavors for propagating the Gospel being guided and assisted by its blessed influence, Thy kingdom may be exalted among us, and the heathen taught to praise Thy holy name, through faith in Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our only Saviour and Redeemer."

Such are the concluding words with which Mr. Bacon parts with those whom he addresses in these Sermons.

Immediately, on their being published, they were placed in the list of books for distribution, by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in England, and, not long since, were continued on that list. And would that they were here, and now again re-printed, in a beautiful style, with attractive binding, and placed in the hands of every master and mistress in our

land. They would speak to their hearts and consciences, as no other little work of the kind has yet spoken. Can no one, indeed, be found to do this? Why, having the imprimatur of the Society above mentioned, may not our Church Book Society do it? or why, having the testimony given it by the late Bishop of Virginia, may not the Evangelical Knowledge Society do it? Why?

But the poor colored slaves were not the only class in his parish which enlisted Mr. Bacon's interest, and engaged his attention. Under date of July 14, 1750, we have a subscription paper, headed thus:—

“Whereas, profaneness and debauchery, idleness and immorality, are greatly owing to a gross ignorance of the Christian religion, and to sloth and idleness, especially among the poorer sort in this province—and whereas, many poor people are very desirous of having their children taught, etc.,—we, whose names are underwritten, do hereby promise and agree to pay, yearly, etc., for setting up a *Charity Working School*, in the parish of St. Peter's, in Talbot County, for maintaining and teaching poor children to read, write, and account, and in instructing them in the knowledge and practice of the Christian religion, as taught in the Church of England,” etc.

And so diligent had Mr. Bacon been in this matter, that, at a meeting of the subscribers at the parish Church, on the 29th of September, he had obtained annual subscriptions amounting to \$284, and donations of \$164 more. Trustees were then elected.

On the 14th of October, he preached a Sermon for its benefit, from Gal. vi : 10 ; on which, after an admirable introduction, he considers, first, the nature and extent of Christian Charity. And having stated in what it consists, he says:—

“For the proof of this, we need only cast our eyes upon the life of the holy Jesus, our great pattern and exemplar, who went about doing good, and healing all manner of infirmities. His first, great work, was that of the salvation of men's souls:—yet we find, that of the multitudes who came to him, laboring under sickness, or disorders, he never omitted one opportunity of doing good to their bodies—and that he also administered assistance to the poor in money, is plain from several passages of his life.”

And pursuing this point, he adds:—

“In its nature, it is pure and disinterested, remote from all hopes or

views of worldly return, or recompence from the persons we relieve—we are to do good and lend, hoping for nothing again. In its extent, it is unlimited and universal, and though it requires that an especial regard be had to our fellow Christians, is confined to no persons, countries, or places, but takes in all mankind—strangers, as well as relations or acquaintances; enemies, as well as friends; the evil and the unthankful, as well as the good and grateful. It has no other measure than the love of God to us, Who gave His only begotten Son, and the love of our Saviour, Who laid down His life for us, even while we were enemies. It reaches not only to the good of the soul but also to such assistance as may be necessary for the supply of the bodily wants of our fellow creatures. And the absolute necessity of practising this duty, is the very same with that of being Christians; this being the only sure mark by which we may be known and distinguished from such as are not Christians, or disciples of Christ; by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

In the second place, he considers the benefits and advantages arising from the practice of this charity; and this he does in a most stirring, home-reaching manner, not to say eloquently,—not however forgetting to say, “I would not here be understood, as if I intended in the least to depreciate the merits of our Saviour’s satisfaction for sin, or to substitute any works of charity we are capable of, instead of it. We can only obtain pardon at the hands of God, through Him Who is the true propitiation for our sins.”

He then considers some common objections to charitable contributions, which, he states, “may all well be supposed to arise from covetousness, or an unwillingness to part with the present penny. Covetousness is indeed a Goliath, a giant of the first magnitude, which is always ready to defy and set at naught the best formed arguments and motives, drawn from reason or Scripture, all the armies of the living God.”

This Sermon was dedicated to the Trustees, and published in London, in a quarto pamphlet of twenty-eight pages. More subscriptions and donations were obtained soon after this, and the school appears to have gone into operation in 1751.

On the 23d day of Aug. 1752, Mr. Bacon preached another Sermon at his Church, in behalf of this school. This he also published, dedicating it to Lord Baltimore, but no copy has yet been procured by us. On the 23d of the December following, he sent it to Lord Baltimore, and to Bishop Wilson, in



England, and in due time, he received most encouraging returns.

Such was the consideration which he had now obtained in the Church of the province, that, in writing to the Bishop of London, the venerable Mr. Adams, of Somerset, then in the forty-seventh year of his Rectorship there, speaks of Mr. Bacon, as the fittest minister in the province, to be made his Lordship's Commissary ; but that he could not discharge the duties of that office, owing to the affliction under which he was permanently suffering.

Keeping his philanthropic object constantly before him, in 1753, Feb. 13, he purchased or procured a farm, of Mr. David Robinson, for the school, on which, subsequently, a brick building was erected. It was about a mile West of the Church, on the road leading therefrom to Oxford.

In August of this year, there was a Convention of the Clergy of the Province, at Annapolis, when, of the forty Clergy then in the parishes, fifteen were present. Of this Convention, Mr. Bacon was made the Secretary. During its sittings, he communicated to that body, letters received by him from Lord Baltimore, and from his Secretary for Maryland. Mr. B., from a Committee to prepare a reply, thus expressed this one thing, among others, that we, as Missionaries of our Divine Master's Gospel, may be enabled to diffuse its sacred light among the savage nations, now involved in heathen darkness, till they all become one Fold, under one Shepherd ; keeping thus prominent and uppermost, their Missionary position in view.

Not far from this time, Gov. Sharpe sent the following note to his Secretary, John Ridout, Esq., by whom it was forwarded to Mr. Bacon :—

“His Lordship, [Frederick, Lord Baltimore,] desires his best compliments and service to the Rev. Mr. Thomas Bacon, Rector of the Parish of St. Peter's, in Talbot County, and desires he may be assured, that his Lordship will, ere long, send a testimony of his approbation and real good will, by money, for setting up and carrying the plan of the Charity Working School, to be set up in St. Peter's parish, into execution, with respect to his and the Trustees' pious and charitable designs. I desire you would acknowledge his Lordship's and Mr. Secretary Calvert's receipt of Mr. Bacon's letters to them, dated Dec. 23, 1752, of which acknowledgment will be sent them.”

The testimony thus fore-shadowed, at length came, and is as follows : it is from my Lord Baltimore's Secretary, and dated, 5th Jan., 1754 :—

“ Sir :—I had not been so long deficient in the acknowledgment of your first, but by reason, the Governor was by my Lord advertised in relation to your request, viz., for the benefit of a Charity Working School, to be set up in the parish of St. Peter's, Talbot County. The Lord proprietor has directed me to inform you, he has perused and considered the general plan, with the proposals and rules relative to the School. The advantages that may arise from such a scheme give him happiness; the tendency being to promote religion and industry among his tenants under his government. And as a peculiar mark of his favor and protection, with the means to forward so pious, humane, and public a benefit, he has given instruction to Mr. Edward Lloyd, his agent and receiver general, to pay into the hands of the treasurer of the School, by virtue of a note or order drawn on him, signed by the Trustees of the School elected, of which he desires you will inform them, viz., the sum of one hundred guineas sterling, [\$466,] as a free gift, to be laid out as you and the Trustees shall think most meet, and the sum of twenty (20) pounds a year [\$6.60,] together with five pounds [\$21.66,] a year from Lady Baltimore, making the sum of twenty-five pounds a year, to be paid by two equal, half-yearly payments, to commence from the date of instruction, and so to continue to be paid by the present agent, and all succeeding ones, unless his Lordship's heirs or assigns, as proprietors, shall think fitting to signify to the contrary, with other reservations in reference to his Lordship's instructions to Mr. Edward Lloyd.

Your request of the boys of the School, called nominal Baltimore boys, and by title from his Lordship, you have here his direction and leave, to stile them so; and as an additional token of his favor and approbation, he sends you his thanks for your obliging dedication and edifying Sermon, preached on the occasion of the Charity School, at St. Peter's parish, 23d of Aug. 1752.

Your true friend and humble servant,

CÆCILIUS CALVERT.

P. S. I have desired Mr. Lloyd, my Lord's agent and receiver general to pay, annually, five pounds sterling, for the benefit of the Charity School of St. Peter's parish, in Talbot County, in two half-yearly payments, to commence from the date of his Lordship's instruction relating thereto, and to be paid to the elected Trustees, by their note or order, on my account, which I desire you will advise them of, and which, with pleasure, I desire their acceptance.”

In addition, thus, to the donation of \$466, the annual subscriptions of the three amounted to near one hundred and thirty dollars. His tenants, spoken of in this letter, were the

freemen, so-called, of Lord Baltimore's province of Maryland. From the highest Government officer in it, who was the owner of land, down to the owner of a single acre, each one paid an annual quit-rent. None, indeed, held any land, but who paid him that rent. Save slaves and indented servants, all thus were tenants of Lord Baltimore, and he certainly showed true wisdom in doing as he now did, for the poor among them, to promote religion and industry ; it was rightly seconding Mr. Bacon's benevolent enterprise. And we are here reminded by it, that manual-labor Schools are no new thing ; there being one at least in Maryland, more than one hundred years ago.

Two days after the date of the above letter, we have an extract of one also, from Bishop Wilson to Mr. Bacon, dated, London, 10th Jan., 1754. He writes :—

“As for the School, you will find the noble present of 100 guineas, by Lord Baltimore, besides £20 from himself, and £5 from his lady, and £5 from Mr. Calvert, [his private Secretary,] annually. So you see, by God's good blessing, the design flourishes, beyond what you ever thought. Go on briskly, get the house finished, and enlarge your views ; fear nothing. The reason I did not print and publish the accounts that are annexed to your Sermon, was this,—I thought they would come out with more eclat and figure, when the house was new finished, and when we could tell the world that Lord Baltimore was a patron of it. Furnish me, therefore, with everything necessary for a proper Appendix to your last Sermon. We must not multiply things of this kind, for the printing of such long accounts is very expensive, and it had better be done when the school house is near finished. In the mean time, you may publish how the design is going on, in your paper. Nothing will please me more, on this side the water, than pushing on that School, and making it a great thing. The £50 for the instruction of negroes, may certainly be laid out in the purchasing a boy and girl, who may be taught and make useful servants for the School, and it is ready for you.”

We here see, how much pleased the good Bishop was, with the plan of his pupil, and how ready he was to lend him a helping hand, and cheer him onward. The unreserved manner in which he writes to Mr. Bacon, shows how free and fond was their intercourse.

The next thing which we have to state now, is a note from Mr. Bacon, to his friend Callister, dated Talbot County, 13th May, 1755 :—

"Sir, your company is requested, with the other Trustees, at the Charity School, on Saturday next, between the hours of 11 and 12, to receive the house from the builder, to agree with a master, and house-keeper, and to settle the children at their own habitation.

Sir, your most obt. humble servant,

THOMAS BACON."

The School thus, had been elsewhere, before this ; but it was not the children's "own habitation." This was. The new house was now finished, and they were to be settled in it. It was a brick house, and is still standing. But about this time, he was called to encounter one of the severest afflictions which could well befall him. The wife of his youth, the companion of his pilgrimage, was taken away from him, by death. She, who had given up with him the home of their birth, crossed the perilous ocean, and settled in a strange land, walking hand in hand together in their journey, was now laid in the dust. Nor was this all ; in the following note to his friend, dated Easter Monday, 1756, are these words :—"I am much obliged for your kind communication of circumstances relating to the melancholy loss of my son !" "Dear little Jacky," as he was wont to be called, was also taken from him, and under circumstances peculiarly distressing. It appears that he was lost at sea, probably on a voyage, in which he was returning to his family connections in England. The circumstances of his loss were not such but that hope remained. Mr. B., indeed, heard afterwards, that he was not lost, but was still alive ; but what he heard thus, proved delusive.

After a while we find that he had married another wife, one of his own parishioners. The time intervening between the death of the one and his marriage with the other, has not been found. She was the daughter of Col. Thomas Bozman, of Oxford Neck, and her name was Elizabeth. The next note which we have from him, to his friend Callister, is under date of "Dover, 17th March, 1757," and is this :—

"Dear Sir :—An increase of family necessarily induces an increase of wants. I have a parcel of garden ground, but neither spade to dig it with, nor seed to sow in it. If you have got any spades, let me have one per bearer, and a few seeds out of your stock. Perhaps a cheese may be had, necessary, as you know, on certain occasions. Pray

let me have another bushel of salt, or my beef will spoil. I write to you with the freedom of a friend, as I shall always stile you, though, God knows, few are the friends I have now in the world. If you have any good news by your ship, on whose arrival I wish you joy, please let me have a sketch of it; if bad, keep it to yourself, for I have had no other for some time past, and begin to be heartily tired of it. I would not write to you on such a scrap of paper, if I had plenty, as formerly; but the man without money or credit must do as he can. Music has departed, and gone into another world, from me. The Laws are my only employment and amusement, yet they are a dry sort of stuff, and sometimes apt to stick in the throat. I have still a heart open to candor and friendship, which you will always find, when I shall at any time have the pleasure of assuring you in person, that I am, with great esteem, Dear Sir, your very affectionate, humble servant,

THOMAS BACON.

A mingling of despondency and cheerfulness, it will be seen, pervades this note, which shows that his afflictions very greatly depressed him. This new location of his, being near where the fresh water met the salt, in the constantly recurring tides, was a bilious, sickly one, as he had found to his cost. And who, that has lived in such a position, can need reminding, how dark and discouraging everything around one looks, when the physical system is deranged from such a cause. And there is little doubt that he was now suffering from this cause, as well as from his chronic complaint, the hernia, from which he never was relieved. Of his peculiar circumstances at this time, we know nothing. But with the living which he held, and the comfortable independence of his father-in-law,—being, besides, Lord Baltimore's domestic Chaplain, in Maryland, and the piety of which we have seen he gave such good proof, he could not long have continued to be cast down. But he mentions here a new employment, which he had added to his parochial work, in its different departments in which we have seen him, namely, "the Laws." This turns our attention to that great work of his, which will cause him to be remembered, as long as Laws shall continue to exist in Maryland.

The last edition of the Laws of the Province had been compiled and published in 1727, by William Parks, printer to the Province, and the then publisher of a newspaper in Annapolis,—the earliest paper of which we have any knowledge printed in Maryland,—and a part of one of its volumes is preserved in

the Historical Society Library. Some short time previous to Parks's publication, which was a small folio volume, yet singularly inaccurate and defective, Lord Baltimore had had an edition published in England, for the use of the Board of Commissioners of Plantations; of this, a copy is in possession of the Rev. Dr. Hawks, of New York. But previous to this edition of Lord Baltimore's, Mr. Bacon mentions an edition of 1718, published by Andrew Bradford, in Philadelphia, and another, which was published about 1707. These were the only editions which Mr. Bacon had seen. Mr. Chief Justice Trott, of the Province of South Carolina, however, in his Preface to his "*Laws of the British Plantations*," published in London, 1721, mentions an edition of the Laws of Maryland, of still older date, *out of which* an abridgment of the Laws of Maryland was published, in 1704. This edition, of older date, appears to be the one, a copy of which is in the possession of the Hon. J. Bozman Kerr, of Talbot. The title page is gone, but it must have been published about 1700, as no Act of the Assembly is in it, subsequent to that date.

But, subsequent to Parks's edition of 1727, for now near thirty years, the knowledge of Maryland Law could only be gained from the annual publications of the Acts of the General Assembly, issued in their pamphlet form, many of which Acts had expired by their own limitations; many others had been repealed, many amended, while many new ones had been every year enacted. All this subjected legal decisions, very often, to much uncertainty, and the Bar to much labor and perplexity.

And another thing; the General Assembly then, so far as Law enactments were concerned, were, to the Church of England, as the Episcopal Church of the Province was then called, what our Annual Convention now is; and consequently, as all the Laws touching the rights and the support of the Clergy, the creation of parishes, or defining the powers and duties of Vestrymen, were made by the General Assembly; and as these Laws, as well as others, were often repealed, or changed, or new ones substituted in their place, it became no less a want of the Church than of the Civil Courts, to have them in one body, and in an accessible form.

In compiling such a work, Mr. Bacon was now engaged. And, as was the case with him in other enterprises for God and for his fellow-men, so here, he engaged in the work with his whole soul, and with unwearied industry and perseverance. He began with the first legislation in the Province, in 1638, and gave the titles of every Act which had been passed, by each successive Assembly, for more than one hundred and twenty years. Those which were now in force, he inserted in full. It was not, however, to be accomplished by the labor of a few weeks ; it was the work of weary years and of intense labor.

In the year 1758, Mr. Bacon gave up the parish of St. Peter's in Talbot, which had for so long a period been the scene of his labors, and, on the death of its Rector, the Rev. Mr. Hunter, was transferred to All Saints parish, Frederick County. This parish was the best living in the Province ; being held to be worth £1,000 sterling. And the giving it to him, showed something of the estimate in which he was held by Lord Baltimore's Government, who held the appointment, and by whom it was made. It certainly was no small compliment, when there such men in the Province as Cradock, Brogden, Spencer, and others.

Of Mr. Bacon's ministry in All Saints, owing to the loss of the parochial records, we have learned little. His parish, in territory and population, was indeed large, being all of what was then Frederick County, North of the big Seneca River, including what is now part of Montgomery, part of Carroll, and all of Frederick, Washington, and Alleghany Counties. The population, indeed, was mostly German ; but there were three places of Church of England Worship to be served ; the two of which most distant from each other, were near forty miles apart. But in his parish he was assisted by a curate, the Rev. George Goldie, who is said to have been very eloquent, and very acceptable to the parishioners, and lived long after him, as the Rector of King and Queen Parish, St. Mary's County.

In January of 1759, two years after the date of the note in which we found the first mention of the work he was employed

in, Mr. Bacon had so far advanced with his compilation of the Laws, that he issued proposals for the publication of the Volume. But these proposals, Gov. Sharpe informs us, Jan. 28, 1761, in a letter to Lord Baltimore's Secretary, met with a cold reception. And this, it would appear, because he would not leave out the "Tonnage Law," so-called, and the Act of 1704, for the support of Government.

There was a political party then existing, called *Patriots*, who denied that these Acts were now in force. To this Mr. B. dissented; and by his enemies,—and, said Gov. Sharpe, 26th May, 1760, he has not a few,—every failing he had been guilty of was greatly exaggerated, and they threw every difficulty in the way of his publication. Mr. James Bisset, an Attorney at Law, of the Baltimore Bar, as we learn, seized upon this opportunity, and published what he called "an Abridgment, and Collection of the Acts of Assembly," in which the Acts referred to, and the Preambles to all, not to mention other things, were left out,—in a small 8vo. volume, on bad paper, at a low price, from the press of William Bradford, in Philadelphia, 1759, which he dedicated to the then Attorney General, Stephen Bordley, Esq., one of the Patriot class. To this work, Mr. Bisset obtained 1100 subscribers; thus setting aside, far as might be, any call for Mr. Bacon's work.

From whence Mr. Bacon's personal enemies had arisen, is not difficult to be imagined. That he had been guilty of failings, need not be denied. No man can claim exemption here; and political ones are not the first to be forgiven. He was, as we have seen, personally identified with Lord Baltimore's Government, and had been given the best parish in the Province, which was said then to be equal to the living of an English Bishopric.

But though hindrances were thrown in the way, yet his project of publishing was not to be thwarted. Lord Baltimore, for this purpose, subscribed £100 sterling, \$444; Gov. Sharpe, £100 currency, \$266; and nineteen others, which included the names of the two Dulanys, the two Charles Carrolls, Scott, Wallace, Thomas Johnson, Tasker, Chamberlaine, Lloyd, Cal-



vert, Ridout, Brice, etc., £50 each. Nor were the Clergy and Vestries wanting in their patronage. This difficulty, thus surmounted, did not at once, however, bring out the work. Most unreasonable and unexpected delays occurred, in getting type and paper from London, and it was not until in 1765 that the volume made its appearance. It was then published in Annapolis, in a folio, as is so well known, of the largest size, of 1,000 pages. The paper and the type were of uncommon excellence. And it may be questioned whether a nobler book to the eye, looking at the presentation copies, was ever issued from the American press. Whatever was the utility of this volume, at that time, to the Church, or to the civil community, as a body of Law, it has now, certainly, a yet higher value, as a historical work. It is the history of the progress of Maryland from its earliest days, not only as to its legislation, but of its civil and ecclesiastical provisions, as enacted by the wisdom of its General Assembly, carrying us through a period of one hundred and thirty years.

Mr. Bacon, as we have seen, left Talbot County, with his health greatly impaired; and the conclusion of this, his last public work, did not find it improved. In July of 1767, Gov. Sharpe speaks of him, as advanced in years, and in declining health. He lingered on, however, till, in 1768, when, on Tuesday, the 24th of May, he died; full of years, and having accomplished much. He had exercised his ministry in Maryland twenty-three years, and left memorials of it, as enduring as they are creditable to his name. And whether we look at him as the Christian minister, or as an active philanthropist, or as the man of his day, we may well ask, is it right that he should be forgotten, and his name go down to the future unhonored?

At his death, he left behind him a widow and three daughters, who appear to have soon returned to Talbot, and there to have resided. Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, at the request of her uncle, Sir Anthony Bacon, of Glamorganshire, Wales, he having no children, went over and lived with him, and inherited from him £10,000 sterling. Before, however, Sir Anthony's death, she had married Geo. Price Watkins, of Brecon, in

Wales, whose public charities were so magnificently endowed by him. He died without children ; but Mrs. W. lived till in 1843. Rachel, the second daughter, married Mr. Rizden Boz-  
man Harwood, of Talbot County, and left, at her death, two daughters, now resident in Baltimore City. The other daughter, Mary, married Mr. Moses Passapae, of Dorchester County. At her death, she left children there, and her descendants are said now to be resident there.

Mr. Bacon thus left a family behind him ; and his published works yet remain, and long will, to tell us something of his story. But where is the Charity Working School of St. Peter's, Talbot, which, in his day, enlisted so much interest in England, as well as in Maryland ? In April of 1787, the lands and buildings, which, for a considerable number of years, probably from the time of the difficulties preceding the Revolution, had not been used for the purpose originally designed, were, as permitted by an Act of the Assembly, passed and conveyed, by the two surviving Trustees, to the Trustees of the poor of Talbot County ! for their occupancy and accommodation, and that is the purpose to which they are now devoted. While, therefore, they minister not now, to the religious, moral, or intellectual wants of those for whom they were originally intended, they minister to the physical wants of that class of whom our Lord said, they shall always be with you. It is by Mr. Bacon's labors, thus, that the pockets of the tax payers in the County are relieved, in no inconsiderable degree, from what otherwise they would not be relieved, and he, consequently, this day, is contributing that much to the payment, annually, of the County expenses. May the day come, when they shall be restored to the high and holy purpose, for which, one hundred and ten years ago, they were solemnly set apart, by the offerings and prayers of those whose bodies are now sleeping in the dust ; and, surely, the high-minded and honorable of that County will deem it no sacrifice.

Mr. Bacon's humane, benevolent, and amiable deportment gained him the love and esteem of all his parishioners [of all denominations.] He was known to have been an affectionate husband, a tender parent, a kind master, and a most agreeable

companion. All this rendered his death, not a loss to his acquaintances only, but to society in general. Viewed in respect to his public character, we find him assiduous, and sparing neither pains nor cost to accomplish a public work, which has transmitted his name, with honor, to posterity. If we view him as a minister of a parish, we see in him a sincere Christian, a diligent pastor, and an able dispenser of the Word ; forgetting not the ignorant, or the poor, and overlooking none. And, viewed as a neighbor, he was ready to advise, speedy to assist, compassionate and charitable. Such, thus, was the world's own testimony, when he was at length taken from it, and placed beyond its censures.









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